

# The Eastern Synod Lutheran Leaders' Edition

February 2019



**74 Weber St. West  
Kitchener, ON  
N2H 3Z3**

**Phone: 519-743-1461  
1-877-373 5242  
Fax: 519-743-4291**

## A Church in Mission for Others

- \* We will practice Spirited Discipleship.
- \* We will pursue Compassionate Justice.
- \* We will strive to be a Healthy Synod.
- \* We will build Effective Partnerships.

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## From Riitta's Desk

Greetings from the Synod office!

In the Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC we promise that—among other things—“we will keep congregations informed of news and developments that are relevant to them, communicate synodical initiatives to congregations and provide timely responses to requests for information from congregations.” This issue of the Leaders' Edition contains nine full pages of useful information for congregational leaders.

There will be five Healthy Boundaries training events for rostered ministers held in the Eastern Synod this year. On page nine you will find a list of the events and links to the registration pages. Registration deadline is February 28.

At the 2018 Synod Assembly, delegates were asked to complete an online survey to provide feedback on how well the Synod was performing on its commitment under the Covenant Agreement. Respondents were also given an opportunity to share

their thoughts on what they believed should be the Synod's current priorities, as well as, other observations or suggestions that they had.

Laurie Knott, the Vice Chair of the Synod has written a summary of the results. It will be sent to all the delegates, congregations and rostered leaders by email. Please, check your inbox.

Grateful for your partnership!

## Reminder to File your 2018 Charity Information Return!

One of CRA's most important requirements for registered charities is that each charity complete and file its annual Registered Charity Information Return (T3010) within six months following the charity's fiscal year-end. If your congregation is similar to most congregations and has a December 31st fiscal year-end, this means that your T3010 for 2018 must be received by CRA no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Congregations failing to file by the deadline risk fines, possible loss or suspension of their tax-receipting privileges, or in more extreme situations, revocation of their charitable registration status.

## New Requirement For Donation Receipts

Canada Revenue Agency requires that a number of specified items, including CRA's name and website address, be included on donation receipts that are issued by a registered charity to its donors. As a result of CRA's recent website move to the [canada.ca](http://canada.ca) website, official donation receipts must be updated with CRA's new website address: [canada.ca/charities-giving](http://canada.ca/charities-giving). This change must be made to your donation receipts no later than March 31, 2019. For details on other information that must appear on each donation receipt refer to CRA's website page: [Sample Official Donation Receipts](#).

## Health and Safety

by Laurie Knott



Laurie Knott  
Vice Chair  
of the Synod

It's Sunday morning. You look around and see more people than normal in the pews. There are a lot of visitors today as family and friends join to celebrate a baptism. The Music Director is just about to play the opening chord for the first hymn when a shout is heard, "Fire!". How would you respond? Who should respond?

As we start a new year and congregations are electing new board (council) members, reviewing health and safety procedures should be on every new board's agenda. Congregations are employers and are legally obligated to meet provincial Occupational Health and Safety Act requirements for workers. Workers include rostered leaders, office staff, independent contract cleaning staff, paid musicians and anyone else who performs work or provides services for compensation on the premises.

Workers have three rights: 1) to know how to work safely; 2) to refuse unsafe work and, 3) to participate in creating a safe workplace. It's not just about physical safety. Creating a safe work environment also includes having policies and procedures in place to address violence and harassment in the

workplace.

Although requirements vary between provinces, some basic components for a safety program include:

- A Health and Safety Policy with an emergency evacuation plan.
- Having a copy of the provincial Occupational Health and Safety Act available for employees. (Have a health and safety board.)
- Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy
- WHMIS training and MSDS sheets for all hazardous products used (may include household chemicals used for cleaning).
- First Aid Kit.
- When the number of employees exceed a specific limit (ex. five in Ontario), there are additional requirements, such as having a designated Health and Safety representative and monthly property inspections.

Here are the links to provincial Occupational Health & Safety Act information:

[New Brunswick](#)  
[Nova Scotia](#)  
[Ontario](#)  
[Quebec](#)

Questions to consider:  
What could happen?  
Where could it happen?  
How can we reduce or eliminate the risk?

How can we manage it?

The internet is a great resource for tools and templates. (Check out the [United Church in Canada site](#). Special thanks to Bev Oag, Manager, Duty of Care for permission to use this site). Your property insurer can also provide helpful information including checklists. Copies of the policies used by the Synod Office are posted on the Synod's website.

While we must comply with legislative requirements, creating a safe space for all who enter our church buildings is something we should want to do. Having a healthy and safe environment is the basis for creating a welcoming one.

[Eastern Synod Health&Safety Policy](#)

[Critical Injury Response Policy](#)

[Fire Safety & Emergency Evacuation Plan](#)



Dear Synod Treasurer,

by Keith Myra



Keith Myra  
Treasurer  
of the Synod

**Question:** With each passing year, we require more and more space to store various types of documents. Would you please provide us with the recommended retention periods for common congregational documents.

**Response:** This is a question that I receive quite frequently. Please note that my response includes regulatory and practical considerations from a general perspective, but does not cover every specific situation. For example, for congregations that are closing, the requirements are somewhat different. Feel free to contact me directly if you have questions pertaining to your specific situation.

It is important to keep in mind that many church documents are critical in ensuring that a congregation functions smoothly and in accordance with the law.

Because these documents belong to the congregation, all original copies should be stored in the church building in a location that is secure and protected from the elements. Only in exceptional circumstances, for example, a small rural congregation with limited physical storage space, should these documents be stored in other locations such as in a member's home or business. Even then, the alternate location should be approved by the congregational council. Similarly, soft copies of documents should be stored on computer hardware that is owned by the congregation and not solely on equipment that belongs to the pastor or an individual church member.

Permanent Retention:

The following types of documents must be retained permanently: governing documents (e.g. current and all previous versions of constitutions, bylaws, letters patent, CRA registered charity authorization, etc.); property deeds; parish register; meeting minutes from congregational meetings, church council meetings and executive meetings; and charitable donation receipts for

gifts that create a permanent endowment. In addition, incorporated congregations must retain a copy of the annual General Ledger (GL) permanently. Although there is no regulatory requirement, it is advisable that old insurance policies, previous versions of congregational policy manuals, previous year-end financial statements, T4 summaries, letters of call, employment agreements and other key employer/employee documents be retained permanently.

Seven Year Retention:

Unless otherwise indicated, the general requirement is that financial documents be retained for seven years. This includes church offering envelopes, budgets, bank reconciliations, bank statements, copies of cancelled cheques, donation records, financial statements and associated working papers, the GL, invoices/receipts, trial balances, payroll records, T4s, ROEs, HST/GST rebate claims with supporting documentation and the Annual Charity Information Return (T3010). From CRA's perspective, copies of donation receipts may be destroyed after three years, but a seven-year retention is recommended in case a

donor requests that a replacement receipt be issued.

Commercial contracts and mortgage/loan agreements should be retained for a minimum of 3 years beyond the life of the contract.

Although there are some additional considerations for congregations that own/operate cemeteries (e.g. cemetery bylaw documents, plot records, etc.), in general, the above requirements also apply.

Remember to shred all documents that contain private or sensitive information before disposing of them (e.g. individual donation records, old membership contact lists, employee records, etc.)

My response to this question does not include information that is of historical significance. An accompanying article in this issue of Leaders' Edition written by Rev. Karen Kuhnert, Eastern Synod Archivist, provides direction for these types of documents.

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*If you have a question related to regulations or other congregational financial issues, feel free to email me (kmyra@elcic.ca). In addition to responding to you individually, I will publish (anonymously) the most common questions/answers in future issues of Leaders' Edition.*

## What Do We Do with the “Stuff”?

by Karen Kuhnert



Rev. Karen Kuhnert  
Archivist  
of the Synod

In an adjacent article, Treasurer Keith Myra provides direction for handling many regulatory pieces of congregational documentation. What should be done with all the other “stuff” that captures how a person, school, camp, congregation, mission or ministry lives, loves, laughs, fails and receives forgiveness, dies and resurrects? Where is the list of what to do with all our church “stuff”.

In the Eastern Synod and ELCIC, unlike some other denominations, we don’t have a prescriptive list for “stuff” management. Due to historical considerations, we Lutheran leaders instead have a committed relationship partner we are covenanted to. Every congregation, mission, ministry, retired and active minister, is to be in relationship with Laurier Archives staff at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. They provide invaluable professional contextual guidance to us in all our expressions.

At considerable expense to the university, they process, catalogue and store in climate-controlled settings our no longer active contents that have been tucked away in dusty file cabinets and closets in homes and churches. They help congregations and institutions develop sched-

ules for ongoing routine submission of hard copy and digital format documents and photographs so congregations and clergy no longer need to store so much in homes or ministry locations. Together, we help grieving Lutheran families clear out relevant contents in homes after funerals. As our partner, Laurier Archives has “first right of refusal” for non-regulatory aspects of our synod’s missions and ministries once we no longer need such items onsite at our congregations, university-college, camps or Synod Office.

Sending materials to Laurier Archives professionals for preservation and utilization by both our synod and by others is to be an ongoing and active part of healthy everyday life as well as one of a number of final acts of merging, affiliating or closing congregations and ending ministries.

We get to turn to Laurier Archives for advice on standards for privacy and consent to collect and use data and photographs, storage within church buildings, and even filing of registers and records for marriages, baptisms, and funerals conducted by clergy outside of congregational settings. Best-practice leaders talk to Laurier Archive staff about

what to retain, dispose of or forward for safe-keeping.

What might “preservation and utilization by others” look like? Why keep “stuff”? Records of Women’s Groups are frequently used to teach basic research methods to university undergraduate students and to write women back into the history books. Sunday School, Luther League and Camp Records have been used in a Ph.D. project to gain insight into emerging youth culture in Canada. A number of books and publications have used our bulletins and newsletters as documentary sources for thinking about developments in church music, immigration, and ethnic change. Photographs and personal correspondence are particularly prized by diverse university and community library users as they capture memories of meaning and add dimension beyond dry data to investigations. And of course, congregational records are routinely used to help with genealogical searches, wills and estate claims and local history projects. For the university, and the community, the “stuff” of our Lutheran lives and the services we provide are already proven to be more valuable than expected. Deposits to the Archives give life to others.

cont. p. 5

## What Do We Do with the “Stuff”? cont.



In one aspect of my work as Synod Archivist, I help congregational administrators and historian/archivists to establish mutual relationships of trust with Laurier Archives staff. This builds bridges for best practices including: automatically sending Annual Reports to Laurier Archives EVERY year; getting fire safes out of church basements and getting corporate valuables out of private hands. As an active minister, I help differentiate truly useless stuff (like multiple photocopies) from contents that could be used by other congregations, missions or ministries. Of key significance in this transition era, I help keep documentation that Laurier Archives truly wants from being discarded or deleted (minutes, newsletters, photographs, anniversary booklets, special events flyers, social justice, and advocacy pamphlets etc.).

Our preservation partnership efforts are equally threatened by 1) hoarders who won't send anything on, 2) aggressive cleaners who too quickly throw contents out and by 3) people throughout the system who don't embrace our relationship with Laurier Archives because they can't imagine anything good coming from the kind of contents I've described herein.

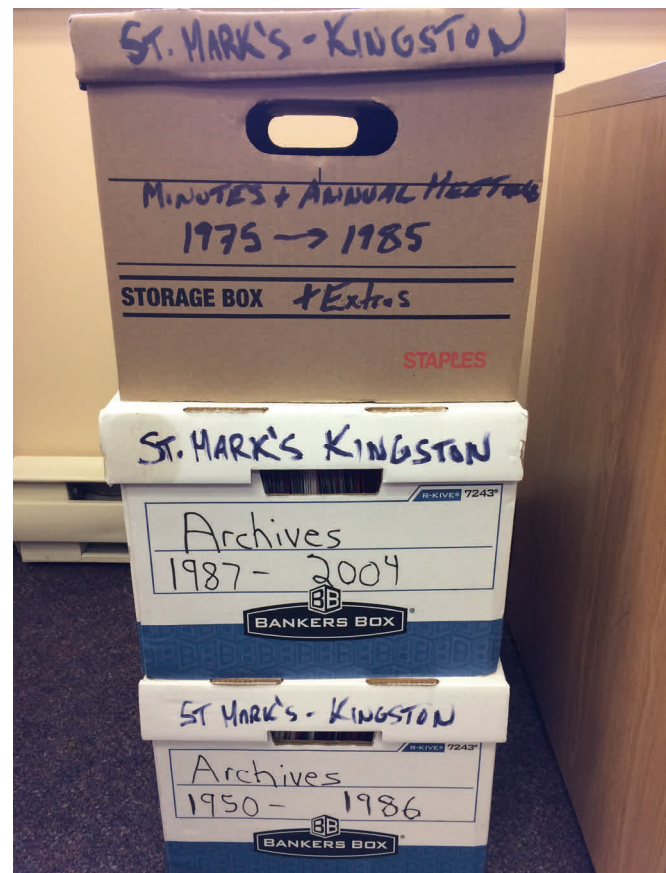
But much of our Lutheran vocational work happens outside of routine and regulatory congregational business. Lutheran-encourager Kelly Fryer invited us all to remember that we don't go to church - we are the church - God's own church! Laurier Archives is our partner in determining what "stuff" of our lives as church has more inherent and inheritance value than we can sometimes see for ourselves.

by Karen Kuhnert

It is my honour to help people see that Laurier Archives can and has already put our mission and ministry into greater service for the world in ways we cannot imagine. They help us extend the reach of our on-going life-story, God's story, enfolded in us.

If you have questions about "stuff" currently stored by your congregation that should be considered for transfer to Laurier Archives, feel free to contact me at

[karenkuhnertcan@aol.com](mailto:karenkuhnertcan@aol.com)



## Rules We Live By: Constitutions and Bylaws

by Wendell Caron Grahlman



Rev. Wendell Caron Grahlman,  
Secretary of the Synod

### Signatures and Dates for Your Constitution and Bylaws

A recent seminar with respect to church/charity law pointed out the wisdom of having signed and dated copies of your congregational Constitution and Bylaws. At present, very few congregational constitutional documents on file at synod office are signed, which isn't surprising, of course, since this hasn't been general practice.

Effective now, congregations are highly encouraged to adopt the practice of having official signed and dated copies of their Constitution and Bylaws, both in congregational records and on file at synod office (as required by one's Constitution/Bylaws).

Your congregational Constitution and Bylaws

should be dated with official signatures:

- They are official and legal documents;
- Some congregations are experiencing delays of bequests being handed on due to insufficient legal data included in their documents (e.g. signatures and dates), and missing documents from congregational records (e.g. copies of your Constitution and Bylaws in your own congregational records and at synod office);
- An official signed and dated copy eliminates confusion about correct or approved versions;
- This is applicable to all congregations, whether incorporated or not.

Signatures and a date attest to the officially approved copy. Signers could be a minimum of the Congregational/Council chairperson and secretary, or of all Council officers, or of the whole Council. If the congregation has an official seal, this is a helpful place to use it. Also consider using a footer/header to include the page number and name of the document (quite useful on pages following a title page, and for pages that become unattached from their source).

A template for signatures and dates is available; please email me at [wgrahlman@elcic.ca](mailto:wgrahlman@elcic.ca) for a copy, or use the example below.

#### Signatures

Having been approved by the Congregation on \_\_\_\_ *date* \_\_\_\_ and by the Eastern Synod Council on \_\_\_\_ *date* \_\_\_\_, this version of the Constitution and Bylaws of *Name Evangelical* Lutheran Church, *Town/City, Province* is hereby certified as an official copy.

Congregational Council Chairperson

Congregational Council Secretary

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Rules We Live By: Constitutions and Bylaws

by Wendell Caron Grahlman



### Congregational Council Policies

Some recent inquiries have also been asking about what policies “should” be in place in a congregation. Congregations who are adopting the new 2017 version of the Model Constitution and Bylaws have probably seen the reference to two policies within the Bylaw text.

Part II Section 3 states: *There shall be a right of appeal to the congregation according to a policy approved by the Congregational Council and shall include consultation with the bishop of the synod.*

Part VII Section 13 states: *The Congregational Council may conduct a vote of the Congregational Council via email. Protocol for conducting these votes shall be outlined in a policy approved by the Congregational Council. Results of the vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the next Congregational Council meeting.*

Some work is being prepared on some sample/ templates for these policies. In the past, some samples

have been provided for congregations developing policies having to do with:

- Endowment funds,
- Privacy,
- Misconduct, Sexual Abuse, and Harassment,
- Protection of Vulnerable People.

Other policies that congregations might consider having in place include:

- Conflict of Interest,
- Financial Controls,
- Health & Safety,
- Investment,
- Facility use,
- Committee mandates and responsibilities,
- Intoxicants (alcohol, marijuana, drugs),
- Use and Reception of Special funds (fundraising, memorial, education, bequests, non-budgetary donations),
- Sacramental practices,
- AGM procedures (date to be held, agenda items, document preparation).

Policies are normally for the direct use and benefit of congregational councils (the

work and legalities for which they are responsible), although some policies will have effect and have more direct consequences on members and congregational ministry. Hence, policies are usually adopted and overseen by the Congregational Council and are within the Council’s jurisdiction to amend in keeping up with changing circumstances. In some circumstances and with some kinds of policies, congregational approval is appropriate. Regardless, a list of policies and their contents should be available upon request for member review and observation.

While some policies may have a general and “fill in the blank” character, most policies are created around the unique and contextual circumstances of a congregation. If you need some assistance to draw up a policy statement, or have questions, please email me at [wgrahlman@elcic.ca](mailto:wgrahlman@elcic.ca) for more information and potential resources. If you have policies that you would consider sharing as models, please let me know.

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## Memory Has to Be Intentionally Saved

by Joel Crouse



Knowing our history is important. It is the story of where we have been and helps point to where we are going. It sets our priorities, and helps define our values, and chart new courses. But memory has to be intentionally saved, carefully collected, packaged and preserved for the future generations who will go looking for it someday. Otherwise, it is lost.

Almost everyone's home has items that may look ordinary at first glance, but have a rarely told story behind them that makes them special. Living in your home, you no doubt know some quirk about the place – where the nails pop up on the floor, the finicky electrical switch – that would be unseen to a visitor, but valuable to a new resident.

It's the same with our church communities, whose traditions and unique character are held solid by memory, and whose futures require knowing the stories, and the sometimes hard-to-see qualities or characteristics of our worship spaces and properties.

Perhaps it is the story behind an antique baptismal font or a certain stained-glass window. Perhaps it is more practical, such as the long-forgotten

oil tank buried in the backyard that none of the new church council members know about. In both examples, the loss of that memory comes at a cost.

When we fail to record our stories, we risk the disappearance or neglect of those items and symbols that most connect us over generations. When we fail to record what is practical, we risk needlessly passing on significant expenses and complications to a new generation of church members.

For this reason, each church in the Eastern Synod is asked to complete a Church Property Information Survey (CPIS) and submit a copy for filing with the congregational files at the Eastern Synod office. This is an opportunity, in particular, to seek out the memories of older members, those who may no longer be serving on council but may be able to identify both the buried "oil tanks" and the treasure in plain sight. With this survey, each congregation is asked to intentionally collect and preserve their institutional memory before it is lost.

The goals of the information survey are to assist new councils in managing and maintaining the property, as well as protect histori-



cally valuable assets for those churches in transition, while creating and organizing a historical document that will be stored safely on file by both the church and synod office.

But hopefully congregations will take this chance to ask interesting questions about the past, to learn more about the spaces they inhabit, and in doing so, become more informed and intentional as a faith community.

For as it says in Deuteronomy 32:7: "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations...Your elders and they will tell you."

*Joel Crouse is a pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church in Ottawa and the Director of Structural Transformation and Redevelopment for the Eastern Synod.*

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*"But memory has to be intentionally saved, carefully collected, packaged and preserved for the future generations who will go looking for it someday. Otherwise, it is lost."*

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## Healthy Boundaries Training — Registration Now Open!

The ELCIC Employment Agreement requires rostered ministers to provide the employer with certification of participation in Healthy Boundaries training every five years. The training will look at the issues that impact those in the role of leadership in faith communities. Founded on a theological and ethical discussion of power and vulnerability, it focuses on the particular roles that pastoral caregivers fulfill within a spiritual community. We use a curriculum developed by [Faith Trust Institute](#).

DATE	LOCATION	TRAINER	REGISTER
<b>May 1, 2019</b>	St. John's Lutheran Church 104 Hughson St N, Hamilton, ON L8R 1C6	Rev. Ilze Kuplens-Ewart Rev. Douglas Reble	Register <a href="#">Hamilton</a>
<b>May 2, 2019 (10am-4pm)</b>	Trinity Lutheran Church 746 Colborne St, London, ON N6A 3Z7	Rev. Jim Koellner Rev. Heather Spencer-Stoltz	Register <a href="#">London</a>
<b>May 9, 2019 (10am-4pm)</b>	St. Paul's Lutheran Church 505 Wallace Ave. North Listowel, ON, N4W 1L8	Rev. Jim Koellner Rev. Heather Spencer-Stoltz	Register <a href="#">Listowel</a>
<b>May 14, 2019 (10 am – 5 pm)</b>	Faith Lutheran Church 43 Meadowlands Drive West Ottawa, ON, K2G 2R5	Deacon Pamela Harrington Rev. Ed Bastian	Register <a href="#">Ottawa</a>
<b>May 16, 2019</b>	St. Ansgar Lutheran Church 1498 Avenue Rd, North York, ON M5N 2J1	Rev. Ilze Kuplens-Ewart Rev. Douglas Reble	Register <a href="#">Toronto</a>
<b>June 18, 2019</b>	Villa Loyola Retreat Centre 4951 Long Lake Rd, Sudbury, ON P3G 1K9	Rev. Douglas Reble	Register <a href="#">Sudbury</a>
<b>Sept. 25, 2019</b>	Lutheran Church of the Resurrection 2096 Windsor St, Halifax, NS B3K 5B1	Rev. Adam Snook Rev. Riitta Hepomaki	Register <a href="#">Halifax</a>

- ◆ All the workshops are open to all rostered ministers regardless of the area where they are serving. Choose the one that is most convenient to you.
- ◆ Registration deadline is February 28, 2019.
- ◆ Details about lunch, starting and ending times etc. will be sent you after registration is closed.
- ◆ Registration fee is \$25. It covers the workbook which will be provided at the workshop.
- ◆ Healthy Boundaries training is counted as continuing education for pastors and diaconal ministers.
- ◆ Pastors and diaconal ministers can use their book allowance for the material and GSI Continued Education Plan for travel and accommodation costs.
- ◆ If you have questions, contact Pastor Riitta Hepomaki at [rhepomaki@elcic.ca](mailto:rhepomaki@elcic.ca)